

MARIETXT: A MOBILE POWERED MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEM



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BRIEF OVERVIEW

In a fast paced world today, having access to real-time information and the ability to stay current based on rapid organizational shifts helps to serve clients more efficiently, as well as to inform planning.

MarieTXT is a mobile powered management information system. The system was developed to build the capacity of the private sector to provide better services to clients and to enable real-time reporting and communication with service providers and managers of the Marie Stopes Uganda (MSU) social franchise (BlueStar) network. It is a web based modular system that has evolved into a fully short message service (SMS) powered management information system.

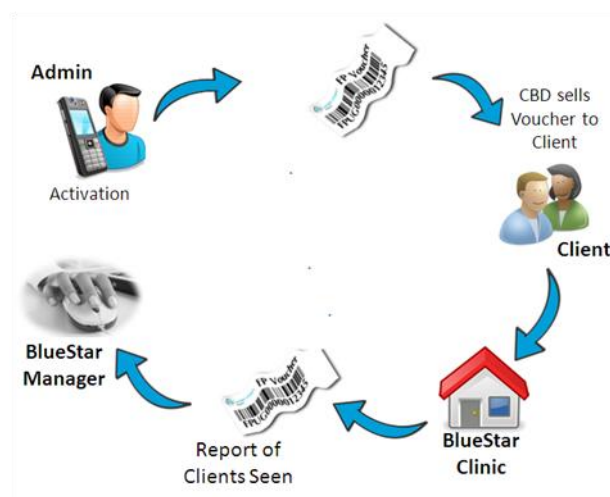
MarieTXT was developed in 2012 by MSU and deployed across all BlueStar network health facilities in Uganda, to enable service providers and community based distributors (CBD) to report daily and weekly reports using mobile phones, as well as participate in knowledge assessments, and pre- and post-training evaluation. MarieTXT has also been piloted with other MSU service delivery channels, business processes and quality assurance including Village Health Teams (VHT), Integrated Marketing & Communications (Hotline), and stock management.

ABOUT COMMCARE

Eighty percent of the data is fed into the system through SMS and it is captured into a structured query language (SQL) database that has a web interface used to view the data.

MSU's BlueStar network includes a voucher project. The voucher module within MarieTXT takes record of the full life cycle of a voucher service. Record is taken through SMS reports sent at each stage of the voucher service cycle including voucher activation, issuance to the MSU officer, sale to a CBD, sale to a client and when the client takes the voucher to a BlueStar clinic for a service. By tracking this voucher cycle, including voucher redemption rates, health managers can look at ways to improve service delivery.

The system captures service numbers of family planning (FP) methods offered on a weekly basis. This is done by service providers at BlueStar clinics.



MarieTXT also offers a text based Hotline where users are able to send questions and inquiries about sexual & reproductive health, family planning, HIV/AIDS, referrals and obtain a response through SMS.

MarieTXT takes electronic record of stock movement to regions and teams, as well as stock disbursement to providers. The system helps procurement teams to

monitor expiry status of selected family planning items in the warehouse, and ensures providers are able to communicate quickly regarding stock levels, to avoid stock-outs and resulting loss of opportunity for service delivery.

Finally, in addition to the above features, MarieTXT has an “opt in” feature where interested users and clients are able to register and subscribe to periodic reproductive health and family planning information. This component predominantly targets youth.

EVALUATION AND RESULTS

Within the first year of implementation, the system had 1,965 registered users, produced 4,862 summary reports, and received a total of 29,984 messages. Of those, 17,765 messages reported voucher sales. On a weekly basis, these users receive questions relating to their work. Based on the responses and their knowledge levels, appropriate training and capacity building plans are developed.

LESSONS LEARNED

- MarieTXT can be used both internally (MSU) and externally (public/private health facilities), particularly in disseminating family planning information to interested and prospective clients of MSU
- The system is an open source software, expandable to report on other services offered by MSU or activities undertaken by partners, as the program and activities expand
- The process used to develop FP messages can be replicated for new content such as HIV, maternal and child health, and tuberculosis
- Like many other mobile technology projects after incurring start-up costs, projects like MarieTXT need maintenance. Resources are required for ongoing leasing of the short code, offering free SMS messaging, and encouraging and motivating service providers and partners to report regularly

CONCLUSION

This project demonstrates mobile technology as an effective way an organization can achieve real time reporting while building the capacity of the private sector. The use of mobile phones as reporting tools enables access to real time information and data, providing an up-to-date status of projects and programs running in an organization.

GEOGRAPHIC COVERAGE

Uganda

IMPLEMENTATION PARTNERS

Marie Stopes Uganda (MSU), Marie Stopes International (MSI) for technical assistance

FUNDER

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